



# Recruitment and Selection Policy

February 2017

## Contents

1. Purpose .....	3
2. Scope .....	3
3. General Principles .....	3
4. Definitions .....	3
5. Promoting equality and inclusion .....	4
6. Roles and responsibilities .....	4
7. Interview expenses .....	5
8. Pre-employment checks and References .....	5
9. Safeguarding and the recruitment process .....	5
10. Disclosure and Barring Service .....	6
11. Politically restricted posts .....	7
12. Former public sector workers .....	7
13. Monitoring.....	8
14. Further Advice.....	8

## Document Control

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# 1. Purpose

- 1.1 This policy sets out the recruitment and selection standards that the Council will follow to identify and appoint suitable employees to create an agile, diverse, and motivated workforce that can deliver high quality services for the people of Haringey.
- 1.2 This policy replaces all **previous documentation or local arrangements related to the Council's** Recruitment and Selection process.

# 2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to the internal and external recruitment of permanent, temporary and / fixed term contract roles within the Council. It does not cover appointments to Chief Officer and Deputy Chief Officer posts. The Council defines "Chief Officer" as a statutory or non-statutory chief officer who, as respects all or most of the duties of his/her post, directly reports to the Chief Executive, and "Deputy Chief Officer" **as an officer who, as respects all or most of the** duties of his/her post, reports directly to a Chief Officer. An officer whose duties are solely secretarial, clerical or administrative in nature shall not be regarded as a Chief Officer or Deputy Chief Officer.
- 2.2 This policy is not applicable to schools operating under delegated budgets.

# 3. General Principles

- 3.1 The Council is committed to:
- Having an effective, efficient and transparent recruitment process that selects the right individual based on compatibility with the personal specification and job description;
  - Reducing recruitment costs by advertising vacancies online; candidates that do not have internet access at home can use the Haringey Libraries wireless (WiFi) hotspots to submit an online application;
  - Implementing safer recruitment and selection processes that ensure that those who are unsuitable to work with children or with vulnerable adults are prevented from doing so;
  - **Making applicants aware during the recruitment process of the Council's obligation to request DBS disclosures for certain roles.**

# 4. Definitions

- 4.1 The following definitions apply:
- **Hiring Manager** - the manager responsible for recruiting to/filling a vacant post;
  - **Personal Specification** the list of specific skills, knowledge, experience and other attributes required of the role holder and which an applicant must address when submitting an application for a role;
  - **Recruitment Officer** – the SSC (HR) manager responsible for providing the Hiring Manager with guidance on the recruitment and selection process;
  - **Recruitment Team** – the SSC (HR) team responsible for the recruitment and selection process; contactable on 0208 489 7000;

- **‘Regulated Activity’**: this means certain activities including work relating to children or to vulnerable adults, as defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (SVGA) as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (PoFA))

## 5. Promoting equality and inclusion

- 5.1 The Council is committed to applying its equality policy to all stages of recruitment and selection. All appointments will be made on merit. Candidates must let the Hiring Manager and or the Recruitment Team know if they have any special needs, which they need to be met at interview, for example, sign language interpreter and assistance to allow ease of access for wheelchairs.
- 5.2 The Council encourages applications from disabled applicants. Applicants who declare a disability as defined in the Equality Act 2010, will be interviewed and considered on their abilities provided they meet the essential minimum criteria in the personal specification for the job vacancy. The Council will accept applications completed by a third party organisations that represent/advocate for individuals that have learning or literacy disabilities that prevents them from completing the application themselves, for example Re-employ, Job Centre Plus advisors.

## 6. Roles and responsibilities

### 6.1 Applicants

- 6.1.1 Applicants who claim they cannot use the online recruitment facility due to a disability are **required to contact the Council’s Recruitment Team in advance of submitting an application** who will discuss with the individual and decide on an acceptable alternative format for the application.
- 6.1.2 Applicants approved to submit an application in an alternative format must address the personal specification explaining how the individual meets the required skills, knowledge, experience and other attributes required for the advertised role.
- 6.1.3 Current Haringey employees who are subject to live disciplinary warnings will have this considered by the selection panel when applying for an internal role.

### 6.2 Hiring Manager

- 6.2.1 **Hiring Managers must ensure they understand the Council’s recruitment policy before undertaking recruitment. Completing the Council’s Recruitment and Selection training and Safer Recruitment training will assist Hiring Managers to undertake recruitment that meets the requirements of this policy.**
- 6.2.2 Hiring Managers are required to treat applicants fairly and consistently; ensuring that one set of the paperwork that records **the panel’s decision at each stage of the recruitment is kept for at least six months from the date of interview and that all activities comply with the Council’s equality and data protection obligations.**

### 6.3 Human Resources

- 6.3.1 Human Resources will be responsible for interpreting and advising on this procedure.

## 7. Interview expenses

- 7.1 Travel expenses incurred during the recruitment process are only reimbursed in exceptional circumstances and when agreed in advance with the Hiring Manager who will discuss this with the Recruitment Team. Other expenses including but not limited to parking charges, London congestion charges, subsistence, toll fees or any overnight accommodation charges will not be reimbursed.

## 8. Pre-employment checks and References

### 8.1 Pre-employment checks

- 8.1.1 The Recruitment Team will complete pre-employment checks on the successful candidate, which will include eligibility to work in the UK and employment references.
- 8.1.2 Candidates are asked to submit original documents to the Recruitment Team to ensure that adequate checks can be made and only when all checks are completed **to the Council's** satisfaction can an appointment be confirmed. If original documents cannot be produced or if one or more of the pre-employment checks are considered to be unsatisfactory, the offer of employment must be withdrawn.

### 8.2 References for candidates

- 8.2.1 Employment references are requested once a candidate accepts a conditional offer of employment and are shared by the Recruitment Officer with the Hiring Manager.
- 8.2.2 Employment references may not be required where candidates have little or no previous work experience for example school or college leavers, applicants for Apprenticeship or Graduate training schemes, where the candidate is returning to work after a career break. Whether employment references are required in any particular case will be decided by the Hiring Manager in agreement with the Recruitment Team and must comply with best practice and legislation.

## 9. Safeguarding and the recruitment process (safer recruitment)

- 9.1 The safety and the welfare of the children and vulnerable adults is paramount at every stage of the recruitment, which means Hiring Managers will think about and include issues related to safeguarding at every stage of the process.
- 9.2 Hiring Managers will ensure that advertised vacancies clearly demonstrate the Council's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.
- 9.3 For roles falling within the definition of Regulated Activity the interview panel will scrutinise the candidate's information including satisfactorily resolving any gaps, discrepancies or anomalies in the individual's career history and assessing an applicant's suitability to work with children or vulnerable adults (as applicable).

## 10. Disclosure and Barring Service

10.2 Candidates offered roles falling within the definition of Regulated Activity must apply for a new Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate as previously held DBS Disclosures are not transferable unless the following is satisfied:

10.2.1 An individual must be a Council employee and may use an existing DBS certificate provided:

- The individual is moving to a role that is the same as the one they are moving from and the existing DBS certificate is less than 12 months old (no more than 3 months old if working with children or vulnerable adults);
- The new role is the same as their current job as it deals with similar client groups and work and;
- The previous DBS Disclosure included a check against one or both of the lists of those barred to work with children or vulnerable adults;
- There is no break in service.

10.2.2 In exceptional circumstances, the Council may need to start an individual without the relevant the relevant DBS disclosures. This is operated via an Interim DBS Waiver (section 10.3).

### 10.3 Interim DBS Waivers

10.3.1 There may be exceptional circumstances where the Council may need to start a Social Worker who does not have a DBS certificate issued in respect of their recruitment to that role. This is operated via a waiver process.

10.3.2 The interim waiver process is only possible where the individual is either:

10.3.3 An **existing agency worker** who has been working for the Council for more than three months. The individual must have a DBS check dated within the last three years considered satisfactory by the Council and completed **to the Council's satisfaction** all other pre-employment checks. The waiver is only valid for six months to allow time for the new DBS check to be received; or

10.3.4 A **new employee who is in supervised employment**, which means that the individual cannot visit sites or interact with children or vulnerable adults without someone else present. The individual must have a DBS check dated within the last three years considered satisfactory by the Council and completed **to the Council's satisfaction** all other pre-employment checks. The waiver is only valid for six months to allow time for the new DBS check to be received.

10.3.5 The Hiring Manager must complete and countersign the Interim Waiver Form (available on the intranet) to confirm that all criteria have been met and that any risks have been considered and mitigated. The Director of **Children's Services** or the Director of Adult Services must follow the agreed approval process when approving use of an interim waiver. Details of the interim waiver process is available on the intranet or from SSC HR. A candidate should not start work in a role that requires a DBS certificate until this waiver has been authorised.

## 11. Politically restricted posts

- 11.1 Certain posts are classified as politically restricted depending upon whether the post is specified in legislation as politically restricted (“specified posts”) and upon the duties required of the postholder (‘sensitive posts’). The aim of classifying posts as politically restricted is to prevent potential conflicts of interest from arising between an employee’s duty to the Council and their political affiliation. The Council is under a duty to draw up and regularly update a list of those posts, which it considers are politically restricted.
- 11.2 Posts classified as politically restricted will show this information on the job description. Applicants can contact SSC (HR) for clarification if they are unsure whether the post they wish to apply for is politically restricted.
- 11.3 Roles considered as politically restricted mean that the postholder cannot have any active political role either in or outside the workplace, unless the post is classified as politically restricted by reason of being a sensitive post, in which case it is possible to apply to appeal to be exempted from the list.
- 11.4 **Politically restricted posts with the right to appeal to be exempted**
- 11.4.1 The holders of posts which are considered to be sensitive posts have the right to appeal to the Local Standards Committee for an exemption from the list, where it felt that the Council has incorrectly applied the criteria for a post to be a sensitive post. The holders of specified posts do not have a right of appeal. A sensitive post is one which meets one or both of the following duties-related criteria:
- giving advice on a regular basis to the authority itself, to any committee or sub-committee of the authority or to any joint committee on which the authority are represented; or where the authority are operating executive arrangements, to the executive of the authority; to any committee of that executive; or to any member of that executive who is also a member of the authority.
  - speaking on behalf of the authority on a regular basis to journalists or broadcasters.
- 11.4.2 A Haringey employee in a politically restricted post must successfully appeal to be exempted from the list or resign from their post with the Council before standing for election or attempting to hold an elected position.
- 11.4.3 The right to appeal only applies to post holders in roles that are ‘sensitive’ politically restricted posts.

## 12. Former public sector workers

- 12.1 Legislation requires public sector workers to notify the Council as soon as reasonably practicable, and in any event before they enter into a contract with the Council, that there has been a qualifying exit payment and that they may be obliged under the legislation to repay some or all of the payment where the individual:
- earned at least £80,000 during their last 12 months of work, and
  - received a qualifying exit payment (as defined in the Repayment of Public Sector Exit Payments Regulations 2016), and

- agreed with the Council to commence working for it within a year of the end of their former role.

12.2 Such workers must either repay to the former public sector employer the amount due or agree a repayment schedule with the former public sector employer. Failure to take either step may delay their entering into a contract with the Council in respect of their new role.

## **13. Monitoring**

13.1 SSC (HR) is responsible for monitoring the application of this policy.

## **14. Further Advice**

14.1 Further advice is available from SSC (HR) contactable on 0208 489 7000 or via the SSC Service portal.